

**Request for Public Comment on the
South Carolina Agricultural Outreach Plan
Program Year 2013**

The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce, State administrative entity for the Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act, invites public comment regarding the US Department of Labor (USDOL) required annual Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP). The AOP describes the activities planned for providing services to the agricultural community both migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs) and agricultural employers.

In order to garner as much input as possible, please forward this public notice to other interested partners as well. Comments or questions on the Agricultural Outreach Plan can be sent to the below address but are preferred to be sent electronically to Bill Pendleton, Federal Programs Manager, at wpendleton@dew.sc.gov no later than 5:00 pm on Monday, June 10, 2013. Comments will be reviewed and added to the plan as appropriate.

Submit any comments regarding this plan to:

William Pendleton, Federal Programs Manager
South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce
PO Box 1406
Columbia, SC 29202
Email: wpendleton@dew.sc.gov

Agricultural Outreach Plan

Program Year (PY) 2013

A. Assessment of Need

Agriculture has long been an important part of South Carolina's economy. The industry has a tremendous direct and indirect economic impact on the state. South Carolina's top 10 commodities are shown below.

South Carolina Top 10 Commodities				
Items	Value of receipts	Percent of total receipts	Percent of U.S. value	Value of U.S. receipts
Broilers	697,509	26.9	3.0	23,172,674
Turkeys	305,877	11.8	6.1	4,991,705
Greenhouse/nursery	242,682	9.4	1.6	15,598,464
Cotton	216,717	8.4	2.6	8,339,439
Cattle and calves	156,501	6.0	0.2	62,925,466
Corn	153,101	5.9	0.2	63,874,136
Chicken eggs	102,511	4.0	1.4	7,316,743
Soybeans	102,495	3.9	0.3	37,574,197
Wheat	75,489	2.9	0.5	14,648,452
Peaches	75,247	2.9	12.8	588,330

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service. Data as of 08/28/12.

South Carolina remains the largest fresh market peach producer in the United States. It trails California in total peach production, with the bulk of California's crop being processing of peaches. During typical years this industry employs approximately 3,400 individuals in South Carolina, of which about three-fourths are H-2A workers.

Other crops active in production in South Carolina are tobacco, cucumbers, tomatoes, collards & other table greens, watermelons, cantaloupes, peppers and strawberries. Tobacco acreage has decreased in recent years in South Carolina; however, approximately 1,000 plus people continue to work in this industry. About 1,500 individuals worked in the cucumber harvest (pickles) in program year 2012 with cucumber acreage holding steady. Tomato acreage remains about the same. Approximately 3000 acres are farmed and around 1,900 workers are employed.

South Carolina ranks second nationally in the production of collards and other table greens. Approximately 1,000 people work in these crops annually. Watermelon production continues to increase and revenues grew over 40% in program year 2012. The cultivation of cantaloupe and peppers also showed some increases in acreage. In South Carolina, 700-1,000 people work annually in the production of melons, cantaloupes and peppers. The growth in the 'pickle'

cucumbers industry and some additional tobacco planting will put pressure on the existing local and seasonal farm labor supply. The Pee Dee Region will perhaps have the greatest need for MSFWs in the coming season. Labor demand will remain about the same in the Lowcountry.

In PY 2013, the number of H-2A workers is expected to grow. The peach and strawberry industries continue to increase the size of the H-2A worker program. Other specialty crops, as well as nursery and greenhouse work, have also contributed to the increase. These activities are primarily in the Savannah Ridge and Piedmont areas.

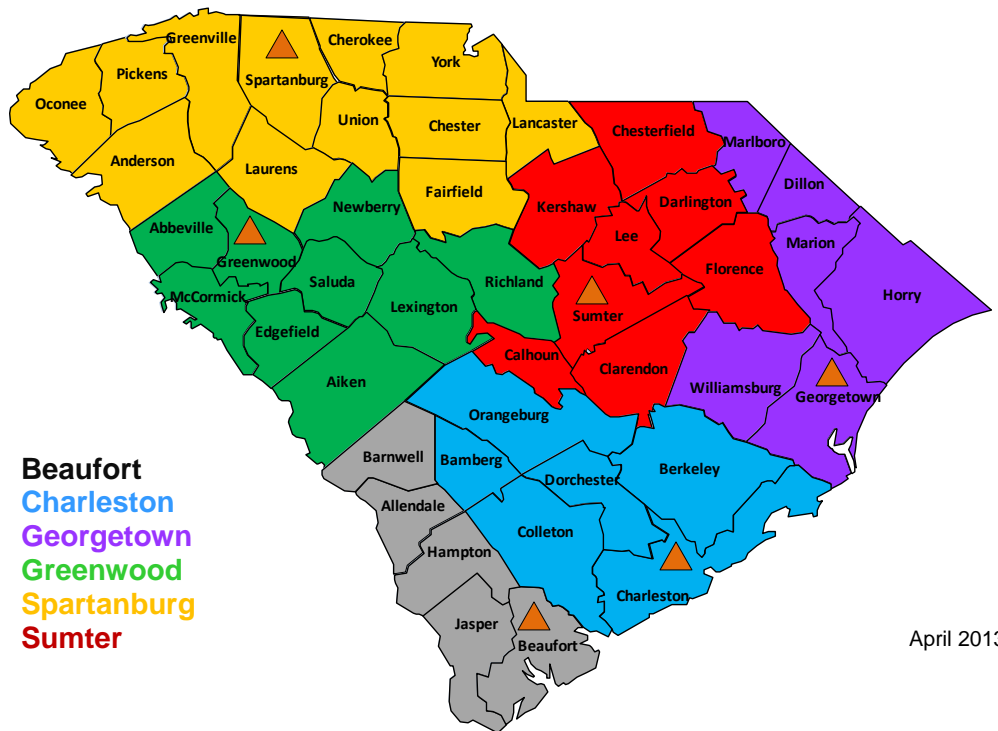
Overall, the projected agricultural workforce need for South Carolina in program year 2013 is approximately 11,500 workers. This is a small increase in the number of workers that was needed in program year 2012. April through September are the peak harvest months in South Carolina. It is anticipated that the number of agricultural job openings received by our Agency will remain steady at about 9,000. This total includes 3,260 H-2A and approximately 5,850 migrant and seasonal farm workers. The number of domestic MSFWs in South Carolina is difficult to estimate and could be understated as some of these workers cannot be located.

Estimated Number of MSFW and H-2A Workers PY 2013		
Area	Estimated MSFWs	Estimated H-2As
Beaufort	850	725
Charleston	950	155
Georgetown	400	15
Greenwood	850	1700
Spartanburg	1,000	420
Sumter	1,800	245
TOTAL	5,850	3260

B. Outreach Activities

The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) will conduct outreach services to the agricultural workers with Agency outreach staff stationed in six designated significant offices. Other public and private community service agencies and migrant and seasonal farm worker groups will also provide outreach services. The six significant offices (Beaufort, Charleston, Georgetown, Greenwood, Spartanburg, and Sumter), which are located in SC Works Centers. These offices serve as hub offices for outreach to surrounding areas.

MSFW SC Works Six Significant Offices and Coverage Area



Vigorous outreach activities will be conducted to ensure that migrant and seasonal farmworkers are aware of the full range of employment services. SCDEW outreach workers and the Rural Manpower staff will work together to coordinate outreach activities, thus maximizing program effectiveness and efficiency. Statewide, there will be six, full-time outreach worker positions dedicated to outreach activities. MSFW outreach staff, as well as Rural Manpower staff, will be primarily supported through Wagner-Peyser funding. The estimated number of MSFWs to be contacted by each outreach worker per area is listed below. Due to the varying concentrations of MSFWs in the different areas, some movement of outreach workers between areas will be necessary.

Estimated MSFW Outreach			
SC Works Center Office	Needed Outreach Staff*	Outreach Staff Days	Estimated MSFWs to be Contacted
Beaufort	.85	170	850
Charleston	1.10	190	950
Georgetown	.40	80	400
Greenwood	.85	170	850
Spartanburg	1.00	200	1,000
Sumter	1.80	360	1,800
TOTAL	6.00	1170	5,850
<i>*Movement of outreach workers between areas will be required.</i>			

SCDEW partners with other agencies across the state of South Carolina that also target the MSFW population, such organizations include SC WIA 167 Grantee - Telamon Corporation, South Carolina Legal Services, South Carolina Department of Education Migrant Education Program, SCPHCA-Migrant Health Program, East Coast Migrant Head Start Program, and faith-based migrant community organizations and associations. The agency has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the NFJP Grantee, Telamon Corporation, that will enhance the partnership, identify resource sharing opportunities, and find better ways to leverage federal resources.

In addition, staff will continue to foster cooperation with other governmental and community-based organizations in providing information and promoting the MSFW program at appropriate meetings and through other avenues. For example, SCDEW conducts annual farmer meetings regionally to allow organizations that work with the MSFW population an opportunity to inform farmers of the many services and benefits available to farmworkers. Both the State Monitor Advocate and the Rural Manpower supervisor serve on the USDOL Wage & Hour Farm Labor Coordinating Task Force which provides a forum for farmworker and labor partners and stakeholders to share information. The State Monitor Advocate is also a member of the South Carolina Primary Health Care Association Advisory Council.

SCDEW will comply with CFR 20 653.107, Sub-part B, in delivering services to MSFWs. The roles and responsibilities of the outreach worker are as follows.

- Contact and locate the MSFWs where they work, live or gather
- Observe the work and living conditions
- Explain the services available
- Provide information about the job service complaint system and assist in the preparation of a worker complaint
- Explain basic farmworker rights when the outreach worker refers an MSFW to a job (20 CFR 653 and 658)
- Refer to job openings and assist in the preparation of a work application
- Refer to supportive services, if needed
- Assist in making appointments

The farmworkers will be contacted at their living, gathering or other assembly areas by outreach workers. An explanation of workforce services available to MSFWs, including the availability of referrals to agricultural and nonagricultural employment, training, and supportive services, and other job development services will be provided in a language readily understood by them. MSFW outreach workers are required to be bilingual and provide language appropriate services as needed. MSFWs will also be provided with information about other area organizations available to serve them.

Each outreach worker will maintain a log of daily contacts which will include the number of MSFWs contacted and details of assistance provided. The name of the individual contacted will be recorded in all cases where an application for work is taken, a referral to a job is made, and/or a complaint is filed. Detailed reports relative to the number of MSFWs, their office of registration, and services provided can be retrieved through the reporting module in SC Works Online Services (SCWOS), the data management, service delivery system for WIA, Wagner-Peyser, and Trade Adjustment Assistance. The “Notice to Job Seekers” which lists the services available through the

SC Works Centers and the toll-free farmworker helpline flyers will be distributed to all MSFWs contacted.

Outreach workers will be familiar with working and living conditions of the migrant and seasonal farmworkers. If they observe, have reason to believe, or are in receipt of information regarding a suspected violation of employment related laws or employment service regulations by an employer, the outreach worker shall document the suspected violation and provide the information to the SC Works Center Employment Services Management staff. They will provide assistance in the preparation of job service and non job service complaints. Complaints will be recorded using the ES Complaint Log, and resolved using the ES Complaint System.

C. Services Provided to MSFWs through the SC Works Center Delivery System

SCDEW's outreach program will focus on increasing MSFWs' ability to access core, intensive and training services through SC Works Centers. Outreach workers will inform MSFWs of and refer them to verified employment opportunities and the Employment Services Complaint System. Outreach workers will encourage the MSFWs to utilize the SC Works Centers to obtain the full range of employment services; however, on-site assistance will also be offered in the preparation of applications, on a limited basis. Outreach workers will refer individual MSFWs, or family members, who may be eligible, to WIA and supportive services and, as needed, will provide assistance in making appointments and arranging transportation to and from SC Works Centers or other appropriate agencies. Further, the outreach workers will make follow-up contacts as necessary and appropriate to provide, to the maximum extent possible, the foregoing described services.

In the SC Works Centers throughout the state, bilingual staff members work with MSFWs of limited English proficiency to provide core and intensive services. When no qualified and trained bilingual employee is available, the SCDEW will offer and secure, at no cost to the client, a qualified interpreter or translator service. If there is a need for remedial and/or occupational training, the limited English proficiency MSFW is generally referred to a local Adult Education office, first, for an "English as a Second Language" course, then is referred to a training provider. Telamon is also a partner of the SC Works Centers and provides additional services to migrants and seasonal farmworkers.

MSFWs will be shown how to use SC Works Online Services (SCWOS), an Internet-based workforce data management and service delivery system. Through SCWOS, MSFWs can establish a Wagner-Peyser application and apply for jobs.

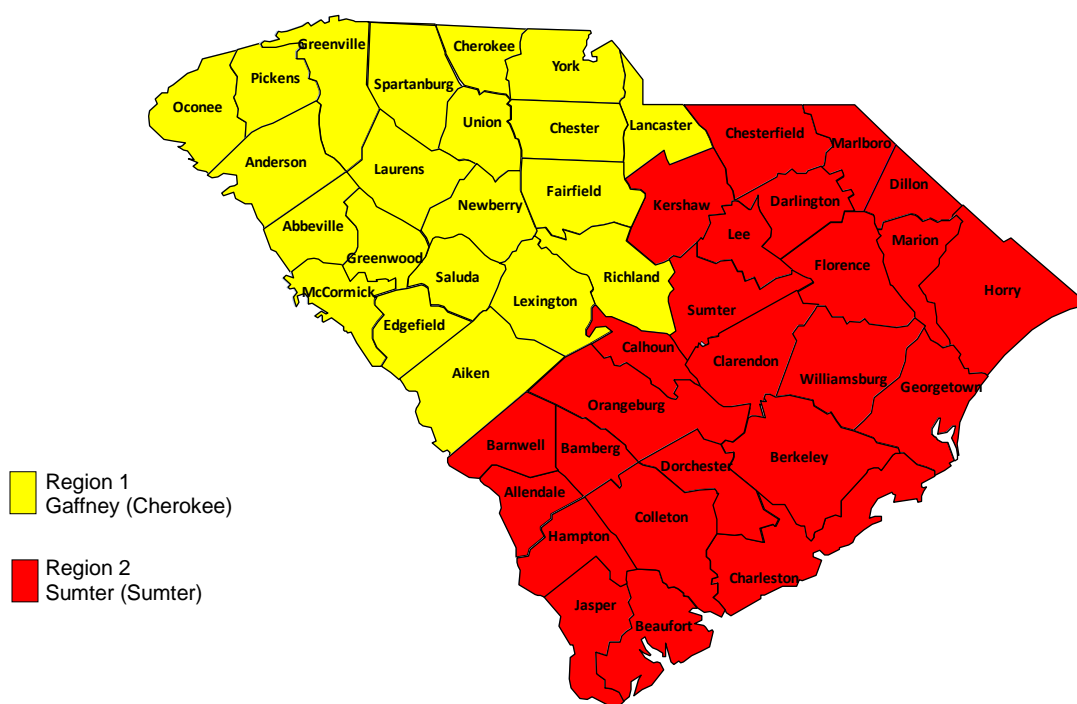
D. Services Provided to Agricultural Employers through the SC Works Centers System

PY'11	
Total Number of Ag Orders	181
Total Number of Ag Openings	7089
Total Number of Orders Filled	110
Total % of Orders Filled	61%
Total Number of Interstate Clearance Orders Received	43
Total Number of Interstate Clearance Orders Initiated	42

PY'12	
Number of Ag Orders Expected to be Received	170
Number of Ag Orders Projected to be Filled	119
% of Orders to be Filled	70%
Estimated Number of Interstate Clearance Orders the State Will Receive	41
Estimated Number of Interstate Clearance Orders the State Will Initiate	41

Extensive outreach to agricultural employers is an on-going process. This is critical to maintaining interpersonal contact with the employers. Employers are contacted by Rural Manpower Coordinators based out of Columbia, Richland County, SC. The map below displays the geographical areas covered by each coordinator.

Rural Manpower Staff Coverage Areas



Examples of services provided to agricultural employers by SCDEW staff include:

- Local, regional and national recruitment assistance
- Screening job applicants
- Provision of information such as crop conditions, labor supply, and labor market information
- Connection and coordination of services with government and community agencies
- Technical assistance with Foreign Labor Certification
- Soliciting and filling job orders
- Disseminating information on farm-related rules and regulations
- Registering of farm labor contractors
- Conducting prevailing wage and practice surveys
- Providing consultant inspections of migrant housing
- Referring complaints to proper enforcement agencies

Many contacts with agricultural employers are made as a result of referrals from other agencies such as the SC Department of Agriculture and Clemson University as well as by word-of-mouth from other workers or farmers. SCDEW, along with partners, host periodic grower meetings to inform agricultural employers of services available through the state workforce system. Intensive efforts will be made in the upcoming year to increase the market penetration of agricultural employers.

The most basic service provided to agricultural employers is the filling of job openings. Job orders from agricultural employers are entered in SCWOS and qualified candidates are referred. All H-2A order users are mandated to take all qualified United States referrals through the workforce system. Rural Manpower in particular strives to refer local applicants to all H-2A orders through community contacts and referrals. In addition, training has been provided to SC Works Center staff throughout the state to encourage local domestic US workers to apply for H-2A jobs.

Other services include the certification and renewals of certification for farm labor contractors and housing inspections of both H-2A and MSFW camps. The Rural Manpower coordinators also perform field checks and communicate with the Chicago National Processing Center in addressing matters relative to any H-2A deficiencies. They also provide critical coordination services by moving MSFW crews to the growers at the appropriate times.

DEW staff will meet or exceed federal program requirements with respect to equity and minimum service level performance indicators of compliance.

E. Other Requirements

Statement of Approval of the State Monitor Advocate:

In accordance with 20 CFR Subpart B, 653.107, the State Monitor Advocate participated in the preparation of the agricultural plan and has been afforded the opportunity to approve and comment on the plan. Recommendations from the Annual MSFW Summary have been included in this plan.

Review and Comment by WIA Section 167 Grantee:

In accordance with 20 CFR 653.107 (d), WIA Section 167 grantees and other appropriate MSFW organizations and stakeholders have been afforded the opportunity to comment on this Agricultural Outreach Plan.